

(GIS) Our Community Top to Bottom (Alta)

Summary

Students enjoy a beautiful day in the mountains with wildflowers, fresh air, and physical activity. We encourage them to appreciate the beauty and the importance of our watershed. 5th grade students travel to Alta, Utah to search for evidence of erosion, weathering, magnetism, uplift, U shaped canyons, and pollution.

Time Frame

6 class periods of 60 minutes each

Group Size

Large Groups

Materials

- Vans and the money to pay for them. Buses do not or cannot go up the the campground at Alta.
- Clipboards
- Pencils
- Worksheet
- Lunches
- Water bottles for each student
- GPS units
- 15 wand magnets
- Small magnifying glasses

Background for Teachers

Look at the Friends of Alta website to view their mission statement about educating young people to the value of our canyons and watershed.

Student Prior Knowledge

- Students should be aware that canyons are shaped differently depending on the forces that created them.
- Previous discussion and photo examples of erosion, weathering, (by water, ice, animals, etc) uplift, etc, will make it easier for students to recognise it when they see it.

Intended Learning Outcomes

- Students will be able to find, recognise and mark waypoints for features of the land and evidence of erosion.
- Students will look for and discuss animals, (or evidence thereof) and plants in the mountains.
- Good discussions in the vans on the way up and then back down about interdependence, specialized structures, water cycle, water shed are called for.

Instructional Procedures

- Jen Clancy from Friends of Alta spoke to the students and the teachers about their mission statement and goals, and the history of Alta. (15 minutes)
- Students move to their groups.
- A teacher or in our case, a university fellow, discusses some of the geology and water properties of the canyon. (15 minutes)

There are 3 activities available. We rotated so that each teacher taught one lesson and the kids rotated. (45 minute rotations.) One activity lasted about 2 hours, the hike to Cecret Lake. This is a fairly difficult hike, some kids, and teachers, are not up to it.

One group uses the magnifying glasses to look for insects in the stream. We used the magnet wands to check for any iron in the sandy banks of the stream.

One group uses the GPSrs to locate and mark places where they see weathering or erosion.

Authors

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